

Detroit Public Library

94th Annual Report, 1958-1959



Detroit Library Commission

Ninety-Fourth Annual Report

Report of the President

To the Honorable,
The Common Council of the
City of Detroit

Gentlemen:

Many progressive changes have taken place in Detroit since the plans for the "new" Main Library building were completed in 1915. The population of the city has nearly trebled in size; industry has expanded and diversified; scientific and financial interests have broadened and the educational, social, and cultural life of the city has shown increasing vitality. To meet the requirements of a changing and more complex city, the Library has also changed. The Library's book collection and service programs have been broadened to meet the increased demands for book and magazine materials. This in turn has stimulated the people and industries of Detroit to make even greater use of the Library's services at the Main Library and at twenty-eight branches, even though the Main Library building has been overcrowded for years.

Two major problems are before the Commission at the present time: 1, the need for a greatly enlarged Main Library building and 2, the inadequacy of the book fund. The necessity for an increase in the book fund cannot be overemphasized. It is a problem of concern to the entire Commission and is explained more fully in the following report by the Director. As to the first problem, I am pleased to report that the crowded condition of the Main Library is to be solved in the near future. Contracts have been let for the substructure and the shell of the superstructure of a handsome addition to the Main Library building. This addition which is scheduled for completion in 1962 will more than double the size of the present Main Library building. The expanded physical plant will not only provide added space for readers and more books on the open shelves but also a better service arrangement of the book collection thus making it easier for everyone to use the Library.

During the past year, construction of a Service Shops building was completed. This building houses the bindery and maintenance shops. Most of these maintenance units were located in the basement of the Main Library building in space designed originally for other purposes and now needed urgently for those purposes.

IN MEMORIAM

It is with sincere sorrow that we record the loss to our Commission by death of one of its most conscientious and able members. Mrs. Hedley V. Richardson died on June 19, 1959, after eight years of distinguished service as a member of the Commission. She was the first woman ever appointed to the Library Commission and the first to serve as President, an office she held in 1955.

Mrs. Richardson was succeeded by Mrs. Mildred Jeffrey who was appointed on October 6, 1959, to fill the unexpired term.

A special word of appreciation is due the Friends of the Detroit Public Library, Inc. During the past year this organization has made substantial contributions to the Library with gifts totaling \$34,856.00 in value.

Memorial gifts	\$ 964.00
Special contributions	4,001.00
Books purchased by the Friends of the Library . .	14,406.00
Gifts from individual members of the Friends. . .	15,485.00
Total	\$34,856.00

In addition to the gifts received by and through the Friends of the Detroit Public Library, Inc., mention should also be made here of the many gifts and bequests which have been made throughout the years. Outstanding among these are three permanent endowment funds. In 1921 Clarence M. Burton, some years after giving his valuable collection of books and manuscripts, presented the Library with an endowment fund (which today amounts to \$325,000) to aid in the development of the Burton Historical Collection, the foremost collection of original and published materials on the history of the Canadian and American Great Lakes regions. A few years later Mrs. Theodore A. McGraw, Jr. and Mrs. Clarence A. Lightner established a \$20,000 endowment fund to honor Dr. Theodore A. McGraw and Dr. Theodore A.

McGraw, Jr. The most recent endowment, received in 1948, is a \$10,000 endowment fund from the estate of Mrs. Grace W. Biddle. The income from both the McGraw and Biddle funds is used for the purchase of medical books.

Books, buildings, and personnel are the three basic elements common to all library systems. Though this report has emphasized the need for more books and an expanded physical plant, the third successful element for a successful library—personnel—should not be overlooked. On behalf of the Library Commission, I would like to pay tribute to the Director and his competent staff who have done such an outstanding job in the face of serious shortages in both books and personnel.

Respectfully submitted,

HARVEY M. MERKER

President, Detroit Library Commission

December, 1959

Report of the Director

NEW BOOKS are the lifeblood of a library. Unless an adequate supply of new publications is added as they come from the presses of the world, a library can very quickly become a "dated" institution, one no longer able to serve a useful purpose in meeting the problems of today and in planning solutions to those of tomorrow. The older books give a library background and depth; the new books give it timeliness for which there is no substitute.

During recent years a combination of circumstances has created a situation at the Library which threatens to become critical unless a plan for major corrective measures is instituted soon. The basic problem is the declining state of the book collection due to inadequate current intake of new books. The factors which have created the near crisis will need little explanation. Nearly all are familiar to people because they have been evident elsewhere.

Decreasing buying power

Foremost is the shrinkage in purchasing power of the dollar. A book fund that has during the past ten years been increased only to provide for new branch libraries to serve new areas and has not had increases to compensate for inflation, inevitably buys fewer books than formerly for every department and every branch. This has resulted in a continually decreasing supply of books just when the need for more books is expanding.

Book costs have risen faster than the cost of living

Using the 1947-49 Base, Detroit's Cost-of-Living Index in 1958 was 123.3%. Book Prices in nearly all subjects for the same period had risen to much higher levels as the following figures show:

Art	161%
Business	169%
Economics	153%
Education	140%
Poetry	144%
Science and Technology	166%
Fiction	132%



Empty shelves—in both old and new branch libraries—emphasize the dwindling book collection



Limited book choice affords limited stimulus for young minds

Growing need for books

1. The educational level of people generally has been raised. It is apparent that the number of high-school graduates, as well as the number of college graduates, has grown enormously in the past decade. Though the Library serves far more people than those with diplomas, the raising of the educational level has created broader and more extensive book requirements for people who no longer are in school.
2. School programs too have changed. Today the teaching program is less confined to textbooks than was the case twenty-five years ago. Students are now trained for independent study and analysis by assignments which require extensive and intensive use of library books.
3. New areas of knowledge are constantly increasing the number of subjects for which books must be bought each year. Nuclear energy, space exploration, and automation are making new demands on the book budget just as television did ten years ago. Since the invention of TV, thousands of books covering every phase of the subject from the scientific and practical to the entertainment aspects have had to be purchased, with no increase in book funds. As long as telecasting continues, these purchases will have to be made, not only for the Main Library but for all the branches as well.
4. The research programs of industry and scholars have created a need for bringing into Detroit more and more highly specialized publications from every part of the world. At the same time the expanding school enrollments have created a need for more and more copies of unspecialized nontechnical books.

Effect of shrinking funds and expanding reader needs on the book collection

The first way of attempting to effect the economies necessary to provide the required spread of book titles was to reduce the number of copies bought of any particular book. This has created a situation in which readers know the Library has a book in its collection but are unable to get it for it is seemingly always "out."

The turnover of the book stock is from seven to eight times a year in more than three-fourths of the branch libraries. Such an excessively heavy use of the available books inevitably creates the need for substantial funds merely to replace books that must be retired each year because of being physically worn out.

Comparison with other libraries

Knowing that all the factors which have created our local problem have occurred elsewhere through the country—inflation, growth of industrial research, increasing enrollments at schools, new subjects that had to be included in library purchases—I assembled figures on book funds for other libraries of like size and complexity to compare with those of this Library. The results are given below.

BOOK AND PERIODICAL FUNDS 13 LARGEST PUBLIC LIBRARIES *

	Books and Periodicals 1959	1950 Population	Per Capita Expenditures
CLEVELAND	\$354,000	915,000	.39
BUFFALO	336,000	899,000**	.37
BALTIMORE	337,000	950,000	.35
BROOKLYN	835,000	2,602,000	.32
WASHINGTON, D.C.	250,000	802,000	.31
PHILADELPHIA	623,000	2,072,000	.30
LOS ANGELES	557,000	1,970,000	.28
BOSTON	216,000	801,000	.27
MILWAUKEE	213,000	871,000**	.24
QUEENS	394,000	1,763,000	.22
CHICAGO	771,000	3,621,000	.21
ST. LOUIS	157,000	857,000	.18
DETROIT	303,000	1,850,000	.17

* New York Public Library (Manhattan, Bronx & Richmond) not available

** Includes entire county

It will take some time to rebuild the Library's book collection. But the reconstruction cannot and should not be deferred. Nor should half measures in the form of one- or two-year palliatives be adopted. Therefore, a program for financing the project has been developed. This is presented as a major need of the Library for the near and the long future.

Recommended Long-Range Program

	1960-61	1961-62	1962-63	1963-64
Books	\$291,900	\$350,000	\$425,000	\$500,000
Periodicals	40,000	50,000	60,000	60,000
Audio-Visual Materials	<u>7,500</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>12,500</u>	<u>15,000</u>
	\$339,400	\$410,000	\$497,500	\$575,000

Respectfully submitted,
RALPH A. ULVELING
Director

Financial Statement

Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 1958 and 1959

REVENUES

	Year Ending June 30 1959	1958
PROPERTY TAXES		
Current Year _____	\$3,440,725.00	\$3,517,497.00
Prior Years _____	91,194.00	44,998.00
	<u>\$3,531,919.00</u>	<u>\$3,562,495.00</u>
SHARED TAXES AND GRANTS		
From State of Michigan (State Aid) _____	\$ 73,983.00	\$ 126,732.00
From County of Wayne (Court Fines) _____	200,631.00	129,267.00
From City of Detroit _____	429,503.00	519,163.00
	<u>\$ 704,117.00</u>	<u>\$ 775,162.00</u>
OTHER REVENUES		
Non-Resident Fees _____	\$ 4,414.00	\$ 4,104.00
Charges for Overdue Books _____	127,656.00	123,406.00
Reimbursed Lost and Damaged Books _____	8,877.00	9,269.00
Sales—Photostats and Printed Matter _____	6,409.00	8,091.00
Rental—Books, Records and Films _____	19,861.00	19,593.00
Rental—Property _____	1,174.00	80.00
Gifts _____	4,044.00	998.00
Payment in Lieu of Taxes _____	4,773.00	4,825.00
Miscellaneous _____	6,314.00	10,012.00
	<u>\$ 183,522.00</u>	<u>\$ 180,378.00</u>
TOTAL GENERAL REVENUE _____	<u>\$4,419,558.00</u>	<u>\$4,518,035.00</u>
Proceeds from Sale of Bonds _____	1,990,000.00	810,000.00
TOTAL REVENUE _____	<u>\$6,409,558.00</u>	<u>\$5,328,035.00</u>

EXPENDITURES

SALARIES AND WAGES (Including Bindery) _____	\$3,295,613.00	\$3,399,785.00
BOOKS AND OTHER MATERIALS _____	333,837.00	341,533.00
TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH _____	20,453.00	20,229.00
FUEL, LIGHT AND POWER _____	98,866.00	95,312.00
SUPPLIES AND OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES _____	157,909.00	183,859.00
EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT _____	3,924.00	10,173.00
CAPITAL OUTLAY _____	1,614,823.00	459,545.00
EMPLOYEES' INSURANCE, LONGEVITY AND RETIREMENT PAY _____	62,687.00	62,231.00
PENSIONS _____	473,136.00	471,606.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES _____	<u>\$6,061,248.00</u>	<u>\$5,044,273.00</u>

ENDOWMENT FUNDS

BURTON ENDOWMENT FUND

	Income Account	Investment Account	Total Fund Equity
ON HAND, JULY 1, 1958	\$24,437.36	\$300,997.16	\$325,434.52
RECEIPTS, 1958-59			
Dividends	\$13,161.94	\$ 317.57	\$ 13,479.51
EXPENDITURES, 1958-59			
Books	-\$12,607.88		-\$ 12,607.88
ON HAND, JUNE 30, 1959	\$24,991.42	\$301,314.73	\$326,306.15

GRACE W. BIDDLE FUND

ON HAND, JULY 1, 1958	\$ 708.38	\$ 10,269.08	\$ 10,977.46
DIVIDENDS RECEIVED, 1958-59	\$ 677.65	\$ 25.27	\$ 702.92
TO WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY FOR MEDICAL BOOKS	-\$ 708.38		-\$ 708.38
ON HAND, JUNE 30, 1959	\$ 677.65	\$ 10,294.35	\$ 10,972.00

McGRAW MEMORIAL FUND

ON HAND, JULY 1, 1958	\$ 1,117.81	\$ 28,124.21	\$ 29,242.02
INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS, 1958-59	\$ 1,126.19		\$ 1,126.19
TO WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY FOR MEDICAL BOOKS	-\$ 1,117.81		-\$ 1,117.81
ON HAND, JUNE 30, 1959	\$ 1,126.19	\$ 28,124.21	\$ 29,250.40

Comparative Statistics

Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 1958 and 1959

	Year Ending June 30	
	1959	1958
EXPENDITURES		
Maintenance _____	\$4,446,425.00	\$4,584,728.00
Capital Costs _____	1,614,823.00	459,545.00
	<u>\$6,061,248.00</u>	<u>\$5,044,273.00</u>
REGISTERED BORROWERS		
Adult _____	267,461	263,121
Juvenile _____	162,157	163,245
	<u>429,618</u>	<u>426,366</u>
USE OF LIBRARY MATERIALS		
Book Circulation:		
Main and Downtown Libraries _____	697,242	702,439
Branches and Other Agencies _____	4,480,849	4,485,388
	<u>5,178,091</u>	<u>5,187,827</u>
Other Circulation:		
Educational Films _____	11,884	11,892
Phonograph Records _____	46,719	44,522
Pictures and Maps _____	86,352	71,182
Miscellaneous _____	63,448	63,488
	<u>208,403</u>	<u>191,084</u>
Questions Answered:		
Reference Questions _____	460,836	446,128
Guidance and Selection Questions _____	408,557	404,571
Title and Service Questions _____	1,266,820	1,177,157
	<u>2,136,213</u>	<u>2,027,856</u>
Photostat Prints Made _____	15,330	15,706
OTHER SERVICES		
Attendance at Great Books Meetings, Forums and Other Discussion Groups, Lectures, Concerts, Book Reviews, Story Hours, Etc. _____	87,513	131,336
Attendance at Showings of Library Films _____	636,957	665,191
Educational Radio Programs _____	171	29
Educational Television Programs _____	67	184
Exhibits—In Library and Elsewhere _____	538	783
Publications—Number of Titles _____	140	152
Publications—Total Issue _____	373,901	282,141

INVENTORIES

Book Collection		
Inventory, Beginning of Year	1,797,392	1,743,695
Volumes Added	125,261	135,139
Worn Out, Discarded and Lost	83,649	81,442
Inventory, End of Year	1,839,004	1,797,392
Educational Films		
	1,241	1,164
Filmstrips		
	874	886
Maps		
	90,395	83,022
Microcards and Microfilms		
	18,898	13,290
Pictures		
	538,361	539,674

BOOKS AND PERIODICALS BOUND	69,699	67,454
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TITLES CATALOGED	17,585	18,928
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NUMBER OF AGENCIES

Main Library	1	1
Downtown Library	1	1
Branch Libraries	27	27
Scripps Children's Room	1	1
Municipal Reference Library	1	1
Bookmobile (16 Stops per Week)	1	1
Special Collections:		
In Hospitals and Other Institutions	33	25
In Day Nurseries and Summer Camps	76	70
In Schools	399	350

Books Circulated and Questions Answered By Agency

	Circulation		Questions Answered 1958-59
	1958-59	1957-58	
MAIN LIBRARY _____	521,278	527,409	817,950
DOWNTOWN LIBRARY _____	175,964	175,030	178,922
MUNICIPAL REFERENCE LIBRARY _____	21,023	20,747	14,563
EXTENSION DEPARTMENT _____	493,344	479,985	47,008
SCHOOLS DEPARTMENT _____	92,421	89,769	6,858
HERBERT BOWEN BRANCH _____	69,126	76,210	13,690
MAGNUS BUTZEL BRANCH _____	96,777	93,259	20,970
JAMES V. CAMPBELL BRANCH _____	76,034	78,861	24,624
CHANDLER PARK BRANCH _____	140,731	148,032	34,194
HENRY CHANEY BRANCH _____	195,567	195,226	71,372
JESSIE CHASE BRANCH _____	274,657	270,809	58,916
EDWIN F. CONELY BRANCH _____	104,922	99,096	24,365
DIVIE B. DUFFIELD BRANCH _____	81,336	81,027	21,245
THOMAS A. EDISON BRANCH _____	312,438	297,681	68,475
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN BRANCH _____	213,665	215,610	47,640
JOHN S. GRAY BRANCH _____	67,289	73,738	13,575
BELA HUBBARD BRANCH _____	215,225	223,019	61,939
THOMAS JEFFERSON BRANCH _____	238,711	242,981	82,036
ELISABETH KNAPP BRANCH _____	110,627	107,878	26,208
ABRAHAM LINCOLN BRANCH _____	152,295	150,954	43,187
GEORGE V. N. LOTHROP BRANCH _____	74,699	73,135	20,030
MONNIER BRANCH _____	106,747	112,725	25,375
JOHN MONTEITH BRANCH _____	118,992	120,609	21,583
FRANCIS PARKMAN BRANCH _____	192,536	208,880	74,578
REDFORD BRANCH _____	186,358	182,238	36,292
GABRIEL RICHARD BRANCH _____	108,061	109,273	40,540
JAMES E. SCRIPPS CHILDREN'S ROOM _____	50,075	44,077	8,625
SHERWOOD FOREST BRANCH _____	214,945	224,064	101,905
MARK TWAIN BRANCH _____	137,217	131,443	47,781
HENRY M. UTLEY BRANCH _____	49,421	49,827	8,700
CHARLES I. WALKER BRANCH _____	85,665	84,234	29,035
LAURA INGALLS WILDER BRANCH _____	107,386	105,910	25,794
ROGER WILLIAMS BRANCH _____	92,559	94,091	18,240
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TOTAL BOOK CIRCULATION _____	5,178,091	5,187,827	
OTHER CIRCULATION _____	208,403	191,084	
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GRAND TOTAL _____	5,386,494	5,378,911	2,136,213

DETROIT LIBRARY COMMISSION

HARVEY M. MERKER, *President*

LAWRENCE REYNOLDS, *Vice-President*

LEON FRAM, *Secretary*

HENRY J. BRENNAN

THOMAS G. LONG

MRS. HEDLEY V. RICHARDSON*

LOUISE C. GRACE, *Ex-Officio*

**deceased June 19, 1959*

RALPH A. ULVELING, *Director*

CHARLES M. MOHRHARDT, *Associate Director*

